

Articles and Sermons :: The Purpose of Trials by Zac Poonen**The Purpose of Trials by Zac Poonen - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2019/9/20 14:27**

The purpose of trials is to prove the genuineness of your faith â€” like â€”gold tested in the fireâ€” (1 Pet 1:7). When gold is dug from the depths of the earth it is not pure. The only way to purify it is by putting it into the fire. You canâ€™t purify gold by scrubbing it with soap and water. That only removes the dirt. But to remove the metals that are mixed in the gold, it has to be put into the fire. Then all the alloys in it are melted away and the pure gold comes forth. The trials you go through can be fiery. It hurts, and you feel as if you are in the fire. The only purpose is to get rid of things in your life that are impure. For example, in countries, where Christians were persecuted and their property was taken away, what was the result? They became better pilgrims. They became less attached to their property because now they had nothing. But where there is no persecution, even the best of believers can be very attached to their property and their possessions. We may imagine we are not attached to them, but we are deceiving ourselves. And so, God may allow persecution to come in our land one day â€” and then we will be purified.

When the Communists ruled Russia, I have heard that Christians could not get a college education or good jobs. They could only get lowly jobs like cleaning the streets. In such situations, we easily get detached from the honour and sense of importance that comes from having high positions and big jobs. All the scum from the gold is burnt away, and we become really pure. Thatâ€™s why it is in places where there is persecution today that you have some of the finest Christians in the world. And that is why I never pray that there should be no persecution of Christians because then I would be praying against the purification of the church. I donâ€™t pray for persecution, but I donâ€™t pray against it either. The Lord knows what is best for us at any time. So I leave it to Him to decide. Either way is equally fine with me. This will be our attitude when we receive the true grace of God.

Peter goes on to say that all this will result in bringing much praise and glory and honour to Christ when He returns (1 Pet 1:7). In the midst of these trials, even though we donâ€™t see Jesus, we still love Him, trust Him and rejoice with great joy. Peter had seen Jesus physically. But Jesus said, â€”Blessed are those who have not seen and yet believeâ€” (John 20:29). I donâ€™t know how many of you believe that verse â€” that, we who have not seen Jesus physically are more blessed than those like Peter, who saw Him physically. I believe that with all my heart, because Jesus said so. Peter goes on to say that as a result of going through trials faithfully, we receive â€”the salvation of our soulsâ€” (1 Peter 1:9). The apostles spoke about the salvation of our souls more than salvation from hell.

Our soul has inherited selfishness and pride and many other evils from Adam. We need to be saved from all the evil that we have inherited from Adam â€” such as our attachment to material things, our love of honour, and our self-centered way of life. Fiery trials and persecution help greatly in delivering us from many evils.

Think of the trial of having a mentally-challenged child. Some people think of that as a great misfortune. None of us would pray to have such children. But if God allows a family that loves Him to have such a child, we can be sure that God will make it work for their good. I have noticed in families that have such children, that there is a tenderness and a spirit of sacrifice and service among the other children more than in other families. Very often, there is a pride that comes unconsciously into the hearts of parents whose children are all smart and capable. Pride does not belong to heaven; it belongs to hell. But, unfortunately pride is found in the families of many believers.

God allows all His children to face trials. In His great wisdom, He knows exactly when to send them. When we stand before the Lord, we will discover that God never made a single mistake in any of the trials He allowed in our lives. Every single trial He allowed in our lives, we will discover in that day, was to purify us as gold. If you believe that, you will praise the Lord at all times.